

Sore Nipples During Breastfeeding

Sore, painful nipples are not normal during breastfeeding. Slight discomfort in first feedings is normal. Cracked or bleeding nipples put the mother at risk for a breast infection. It is also not normal for the nipples to be creased, wedged, oddly shaped, or white after nursing.

TIPS TO PREVENT SORE NIPPLES:

- ◆ Use correct positioning and latch on. Make sure the position doesn't change as the baby goes to sleep.
- ◆ Bring the baby to the breast. Can use a pillow so that the baby is at breast level.
- ◆ Release the baby from the breast by gently inserting a finger in the corner of the baby's mouth.
- ◆ Use warm wash cloths on upper part of breast and/or express a little milk before latch on to help with letdown so baby does not have to suck hard.
- ◆ Don't use soaps or alcohol on your nipples. Splashing with clean water is clean enough.
- ◆ Nurse frequently as a very hungry baby can cause nipple trauma through vigorous sucking.
- ◆ Air dry nipples.
- ◆ Avoid wet bra pads or plastic backed pads. Change them frequently so that the pads stay dry.

SORE NIPPLE HINTS

- ◆ Cover the nipple with a warm, wet washcloth immediately after nursing.
- ◆ Apply olive oil, breastmilk or lanolin after nursing. There's no need to wash off before nursing.
- ◆ If lanolin does not help, contact a lactation consultant or your doctor.
- ◆ Pump or hand express if nursing is too painful.
- ◆ Give the expressed milk by spoon, cup or bottle.
- ◆ Use a different nursing position each time to avoid reinjuring the same spot.
- ◆ Get help from a breastfeeding counselor if the problem is severe.
- ◆ See a doctor for a temperature of 100.8 degrees or more.

For more information call:



Adapted from the
Arkansas Department of
Health WIC Program.